

Khomeini Security Chief Reportedly Seen in U.S.

By ROBERT PEAR

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 14 — Law enforcement officials said here today that they believed that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's internal security chief, Gen. Hossein Fardoust, had been in the Washington area shortly before the shooting of an Iranian exile leader last month.

The apparent purpose of his trip, the officials said, was to step up activities in support of the Ayatollah and against his critics.

David Passage, a State Department spokesman, said today that the department was aware of the reports, circulated among Federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Iranian exiles have told the police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation that they saw General Fardoust here in the

two weeks before Ali-Akbar Tabatabai was shot to death in the doorway of his home in suburban Bethesda, Md., on July 22. The investigators have obtained independent information, apparently from intelligence sources, corroborating the reports, according to Government officials familiar with the inquiry.

Mr. Tabatabai was press attache at the Iranian Embassy here under the Shah and, as president of the Iranian Freedom Foundation, established last year, had become an outspoken critic of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The revolutionary Government in Iran and its supporters have encouraged demonstrations in support of Ayatollah Khomeini in several countries and an Iranian judge, Ayatollah Sadegh Khalkhali, took responsibility for having a nephew of the Shah killed on a Paris street last December.

American Accused in Killing

The Iranian Government and its supporters are also suspected of having had a role in other shootings outside Iran, including an attempt in Paris on the life of Dr. Shahpur Bakhtiar, a leading opponent of Ayatollah Khomeini.

In court papers, the Montgomery County, Md., police and the F.B.I. have described Daoud Salahuddin, also known as David Theodore Belfield, as the killer of Mr. Tabatabai. They have obtained warrants for his arrest on a state murder charge and a Federal civil rights charge. The 29-year-old Mr. Salahuddin, an American, worked in the Iranian interests section of the Algerian Embassy, which has represented Iran in this country since Washington and Teheran broke off formal diplomatic relations in April.

Spokesmen for the F.B.I. have said that Mr. Salahuddin left the United States shortly after the killing of Mr. Tabatabai and may have gone to Iran.

High Official Under Shah

General Fardoust, according to American officials, is the head of Iran's new internal security and intelligence operation, known as Savama. He had been deputy chief of Savak, the secret police force of the late Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi, and was reportedly arrested by the revolutionary forces in Iran in March 1979. In her recently published memoirs, "Faces in a Mirror," the Shah's twin sister, Ashraf, said that General Fardoust used to meet daily with the Shah but became disloyal toward the end of his reign, withholding vital information and enter-

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meini.

Mr. Tabatabai's twin brother, Mohammed Reza Tabatabai, said that Federal officials had shown him pictures of General Fardoust to confirm his identity last week. Mohammed Tabatabai, a naturalized American citizen, said he told the officials that he had seen Mrs. Fardoust at a party in suburban Maryland about three months ago. He said today he understood that Mrs. Fardoust sometimes lives in the United States and that the Fardousts had at least two children attending school in New England.

Sources close to the investigation said they believed that General Fardoust may have entered the United States on a false passport, probably not Iranian. The Carter Administration has sharply curtailed the issuance of visas to Iranian citizens as one way of penalizing Iran for holding the American hostages seized last November.

General Fardoust, a four-star general under the Shah, is believed to have stayed in northern Virginia while he was here last month. Investigators are trying to determine whether he communicated then with A. Bahrām Nahidian, the unofficial leader of Khomeini supporters in the United States.

192 Demonstrators Arrested

Mr. Nahidian, a naturalized American citizen, reached today at his rug store in the Georgetown section of Washington, declined to answer any questions about General Fardoust.

On July 27, the day on which Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi died in exile in Egypt, 192 supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini were arrested here in demonstrations during which they clashed with the police and with opponents of the Ayatollah. The 192 were held in various jails and prisons for nine days. After their release, many came back here to participate in further demonstrations in support of the Ayatollah.

Federal officials said last week they had evidence that Iran had sent money and organizational assistance to the Ayatollah's supporters to help them stir up civil disturbances in the United States.

Federal and local officials said they believed the shooting of Mr. Tabatabai might have been part of a coordinated international effort to eliminate foes of Ayatollah Khomeini after an unsuccessful coup attempt in Iran last month.

The Iranian Government said on July 10 that it had smashed a plot by military officers to bomb the Ayatollah's home and bring back Dr. Bakhtiar, the last Prime Minister appointed by the Shah. On July 18, several armed men posing as journalists attempted to assassinate Dr. Bakhtiar in his apartment in Paris; he was unhurt, but two other people were killed.

On July 22, a gunman dressed as a mailman killed Dr. Tabatabai. On July 31 in Los Angeles, a 19-year-old Iranian student, a bodyguard for Cambyse Shah-Rais, the leader of an anti-Khomeini group on the West Coast, was shot and wounded as he sat in a car outside Mr. Shah-Rais's home. The gunman was dressed in a jogging suit.